

1980's psychedelic rock

Siouxsie and the Banshees reviewed

By WILFRED LANGMAID
Brunswickan StaffSiouxsie and the Banshees
Hyaena

Psychedelic rock, also known as acid rock or the San Francisco Sound, was at its apex during the last half of the 1960s, that era of peace, love, and brain damage. At that time, such bands as the Grateful Dead, Strawberry Alarm Clock, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and the early Sid Barrett-dominated Pink Floyd produced albums which musically enhanced or recreated hard drug trips. Since that time, the abundance and popularity of acid rock has dwindled. The Dead are in fact the only surviving psychedelic group from the sixties.

However, a relatively more recent group, Siouxsie and the Banshees, shows signs of being a dominant psychedelic group of the eighties with their latest album *Hyaena*.

The dominant musical force

of this group is vocalist Siouxsie Sioux, who is nothing short of an awesome singer. Next to her voice, the most powerful component of the group's sound is the drumming of a chap named Budgie. His drumming is often rudimentary, but it gnaws at you and is always a strong force. Steve Severin's bass playing is the most conventional part of the group's sound, while Robert Smith adroitly handles guitars and keyboards.

A highly orchestrated string arrangement begins the album opener "Dazzle". When Sioux comes in, she is actually quite subdued for a stanza. Then, in comes Budgie with two over-dubbed types of drumming; one is conventional while the other sounds like a person playing the drum break in "Wipeout" on a rusty old barrel. Meanwhile, the strings strategically play a minor chord arrangement while the guitar's stylized lines fit into the brilliant unorthodoxy. Suddenly, it ends with the



soothing strings recapitulating the introduction.

Everything that Siouxsie and the Banshees try on *Hyaena* works - from the dischord of "We Hunger" which features drumming one evolutionary step above the barrel-thumping of its immediate predecessor "Dazzle" and Sioux's most sultry vocals as she softly growls "hunger for this", to a remake of the Beatles' "Dear Prudence" which has some real "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds" (naturally) instrumental overtones and actually features conventional drumming.

Keyboards certainly do play a role in this group's sound at times. They are most striking in "Take Me Back" but they also add immeasurably to the album's highlight "Swimming Horses". "Swimming Horses" is, however, primarily a showcase for the power of Sioux's vocals. She conjures up images of Grace Slick, that voice which launched a thousand trips, with her absolutely transfixed vocals on this track. The chord progression, carried by the electric piano, further adds to the atmosphere.

Coupling Sioux's dynamic vocals with the group's lyrics

which are at their nicest sombre and are in fact often sinister (even the title of the song "Bring Me The Head Of The Preacher Man" is horrifying) makes the *Hyaena* an album which the would-be psychedelic listener could find a bad scene. As Sioux sings in the album's final cut "Blow The

House Down": "This dervish frenzy will make you run around/ This dervish frenzy will turn your head around/ Blow the house down."

At this point, the listener could find *Hyaena* to be the catalyst to an ugly experience.

John Vaundertuin-
master on the organ

John Vandertuin is a master of the organ who has been touring since the age of thirteen. He began his study of music at the Ontario School for the Blind. In 1971, he studied with the renowned French organist, Jean Langlais. He has performed extensively in Canada, the United States and Europe.

John Vandertuin holds the Associateship diplomas in piano and organ from Toronto Conservatory. He studied with Barry Cabena, Jan Overduin, John McIntosh and Larry Cortner. In 1979, he was the First Prize winner of the Summer Organ Academy held at St. Joseph's Oratory under the direction of Raymond Daveluy. He was the First Prize winner

of the Healy Willan National Improvisation Competition at the 1980 Guelph Spring Festival and participated in the Summer Academy at Haarlem, Holland. While in Holland, he gave the premier recital on the new organ at Kollumerwaag. At a recent concert in Brantford, Ontario the Expositor said, "His interpretation bore all the marks that one has come to expect of this excellent performer - particularly notable was the driving sense of rhythm which he gave through careful articulation." Without the benefit of sight this young artist has acquired a large repertoire covering works from pre-baroque to modern.

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Top 30 as of October 12, 1984

Compiled by Curtis Baxter

1. ★ Men Without Hats--Folk of the 80's--(Sire)--(1)
2. ★ Spoons--Tell No Lies--(Ready)--(3)
3. ★ Tenants--Visions Of Our Future--(Epic)--(6)
4. ★ Screaming Bamboo--World of Tomorrow--(Dad's Favourite)--(4)
5. ★ Deja Voodoo--Cemetery--(OG)--(2)
6. A Flock of Seagulls--Story of a Young Heart--(Jive)--(19)
7. Talking Heads--Stop Making Sense--(Sire)--(9)
8. Fixx--Phantoms--(MCA)--(22)
9. Psychedelic Furs--Mirror--(Columbia)--(8)
10. Julian Cope--World Shut Your Mouth--(Vertigo)--(5)
11. Fadgadget--Gag--(Mute)--(7)
12. La Danza--La Danza--(Rabid Cat)--(15)
13. ★ Moev--Toulyev--(Netzwerk)--(11)
14. ★ Durango 95--Lose Control--(Star)--(10)
15. ★ Design--Design (EP)--(YUL)--(17)
16. Spandau Ballet--Parade--(Chrysalis)--(New)
17. Depeche Mode--People Are People--(Sire)--(14)
18. ★ Front--Underworld--(Duke Street)--(New)
19. U2--Pride (7'')--(Islands)--(16)
20. Sacred Cowboys--Sacred Cowboys--(Fringe)--(24)
21. ★ Bruce Cockburn--Stealing Fire--(True North)--(13)
22. Nick Lowe--Nick Lowe and His Cowboy Outfit--(Columbia)--(New)
23. Mike Oldfield--To France--(Virgin)--(18)
24. Roger Taylor--Strange Frontier--(Capitol)--(12)
25. Vicious Pink--Coccan't You See (EP)--(EMI)--(25)
26. Summers & Fripp--Bewitched--(A&M)--(26)
27. Reds--Shake Appeal--(Sire)--(New)
28. ★ Steps Around the House--Neighbour Attack--(Demo Tape)--(New)
29. Ultravox--Lament--(Chrysalis)--(28)
30. Neil--Hole In My Shoe(7'')--(Island)--(21)

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